



# Currents



News and Developments for Customers of the Macon Water Authority

## Ed DeFore, Sr. honored for lifetime of service, including 14 years at MWA

During its December Meeting, the MWA honored Macon native Ed DeFore, Sr. with a resolution commemorating his "lifetime of dedicated and distinguished service to the Authority, its customers, and to the citizens and community of Macon-Bibb County."

Mr. DeFore has served 14 years as a Board Member of the MWA, from 1992-1996, and again from 2006 to 2016. He first served as a Representative of the Macon City Council, and then as a Representative of the Macon-Bibb County Commission.

"I feel privileged to have been associated with the MWA for 14 years," says DeFore.

Mr. DeFore was first elected to the Macon City Council in 1971 and served in city government for 42 years, making him the longest-serving council member in Macon's modern history. Citizens then elected him in 2013 to the first Macon-Bibb County Commission, where he represented District 6 during



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his term that concludes at the end of this year.

Among the many local civic organizations he has served or supported include the Macon Rescue Mission, the Boys & Girls Club, the Boy Scouts of America, as well as the Mayor's Fort Hawkins Commission and Disability Committee.

After graduating from Lanier High School, he played professional baseball for three years. He was inducted into the Macon Sports Hall of Fame in 2001, and the Bibb County Commission named the Bibb Sports Complex in his honor in 2007.

"I have enjoyed working with former Chairman Frank Amerson, Chairman Sam Hart, my fellow Board Members, and Executive Director Tony Rojas," adds DeFore. "I am most proud of the service I have given to the great customers of this utility."

A lifelong Macon resident, he and his wife Pat have been married 66 years.

For the complete feature on Ed DeFore, Sr., check out our website news at [www.maconwater.org](http://www.maconwater.org).

## Water Assistance Program reflects the Spirit of Giving

If you want to celebrate the holidays by helping others in need, the MWA has such an opportunity in its Water Assistance Program.

On the pay stub portion of your MWA customer bill, you can specify the amount of your donation to the Water Assistance Program to help others with their utility payments. The MWA sends your contributions to the Bibb County Division of Family and Children Services for disbursement.

In order to make a contribution to the Water Assistance Program, please check one of the boxes designating the donation amount and then add that to your final bill. For example, if your total bill is \$25.46 and you check the box to contribute \$1, then your final payment, including your water/sewer bill AND the donation, would be \$26.46.

For more information, contact us at 478-464-5600.

## New SPLOST passes, to include \$25 million for stormwater

Thanks to Macon-Bibb County voters who approved a \$280 million Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) during this past General Election, the community's Stormwater Management Program will receive a possible \$25 million boost for much needed capital projects to repair and replace aging stormwater infrastructure.

The SPLOST referendum up for renewal on Nov. 8 passed by a margin of approximately 61 percent to 39 percent, representing a healthy majority in favor of tax revenues that include consumer spending from guests outside of Macon-Bibb County who visit and shop within our borders.

The current \$190 million SPLOST, which was approved by voters in 2011, ends on March 30, 2018, at the conclusion of its six-year window. Officials note that these sales tax revenues are falling short of expectations. As a result, there are \$4.4 million worth of needed stormwater projects that have been budgeted and approved that may not be completed as planned.

The new SPLOST, which will go into effect in April of 2018, will be collected until the full \$280 million has been attained. In addition, Macon-Bibb County officials will have some flexibility in budgeting the \$280 million for the list of projects planned with the SPLOST funding.

Even with the new SPLOST of \$25 million earmarked for future Stormwater Projects, the local stormwater program will require other funding sources. With that in mind, the

MWA has asked that a Stormwater Program Study be conducted by consulting engineers from Barge, Waggoner, Sumner & Cannon.

The MWA hosted a fourth Stormwater Management Program Workshop, in partnership with the Macon-Bibb County Commission, at its headquarters on Nov. 17. This workshop defined those possible funding sources, which include service fees in accordance with the proposed extent and level of stormwater services. The Workshop also provided estimates for the cost of services for a sustainable, fully compliant MWA Stormwater Management Program.



With the passage of the \$280 million SPLOST on Election Day, Macon-Bibb County will have \$25 million earmarked for stormwater repair projects, such as this one completed on Hillcrest Avenue.

## EPD declares Level 1 Drought

In response to the Level 1 Drought Declaration on Nov. 17 by Georgia EPD for 58 counties including Macon-Bibb, the MWA is encouraging water customers to use water wisely and to follow the current outdoor water use rules. Daily outdoor watering is OK except between the hours of 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Consider wise water use tips as well:

- ✿ Only water when necessary, in the early morning or late evening.
- ✿ Water in several short sessions rather than in one long session, to reduce runoff and to allow water to reach plant roots.
- ✿ Check and repair leaks inside and outside of the home. (Don't forget to winterize exposed pipes, too.)
- ✿ Take shorter showers, and turn off the water when shaving or brushing teeth.
- ✿ Fill dishwashers and washing machines, assuring a full load when they are in use.

For more information on water conservation, including the complete outdoor water use rules and exemptions, log onto [www.epd.georgia.gov/water-conservation](http://www.epd.georgia.gov/water-conservation).



## MWA adopts Five-Year Rate Plan, sets rates for 2017 - 2019

At its October Meeting, which was the first of the new fiscal year, the Macon Water Authority (MWA) Board of Directors adopted a five-year rate plan upon the recommendation of the Authority's Finance Committee, which sets the utility's water and sewer rates for 2017 - 2019.

The MWA five-year rate plan, which will be reviewed and updated annually as needed for each budget

cycle, is the result of in-depth analysis by the Authority's staff of customer demand trends, operational requirements of the utility, capital project needs, and debt coverage targets required for bond issues and long-term financing.

The new MWA rates that will go into effect on Jan. 1, 2017 will include a 10-cent increase per CCF (a unit of consumption that



equates to approximately 750 gallons) in the variable charge for water for all residential and non-residential customers, in addition to a 10-cent increase per CCF in the variable charge for sewer.

There will be no increase in the base charge for water or sewer for customers with a typical 5/8-inch or 1-inch meter, which

includes approximately 90 percent of MWA customer accounts.

The typical MWA residential water and sewer customer should see their monthly bill increase by approximately 2.5%. Even with the slight increase in water and sewer volume rates for 2017, the MWA will maintain some of the most competitive water and sewer rates among public utilities in Georgia.

### MWA gets an A+ for its sewer system

The New Year will be particularly noteworthy at the MWA, as the utility closed out 2016 by bringing home a number of top industry awards.

During the Fall Conference of the Georgia Association of Water Professionals (GAWP), the Authority staff accepted the Collection System Platinum Award for outstanding operation of a sewer utility.

The GAWP Collection System Award is given to those utilities that have achieved a grade of 95% or higher on the annual sewer system audit, conducted by peers in the water profession, for at least five consecutive years. This year marks the sixth consecutive year the MWA has attained this highest grade for sewer

collection system excellence.

In addition, the MWA also received the GAWP Certificate of Distinguished Merit for its Water Quality Laboratory at the Frank C. Amerson, Jr. Water Treatment Plant.

Finally, the MWA Finance Department has been recognized by the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) with its Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for the 19th consecutive year. This Certificate was presented to the MWA for its Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) from the 2015 fiscal year (FY15). In addition, the MWA also received the GFOA Award for Outstanding Achievement in Popular Annual Financial Reporting (PAFR) for the fourth consecutive year.



GAWP recognized the MWA with the Collection System Platinum Award for its sewer system operations that graded out at 95% or higher for six straight years.

### Holidays are better without FOG

Now that we are entering the holiday season, when home cooking and favorite family recipes will be enjoyed more than any other time of the year, the MWA encourages customers to help in the fight against FOG.

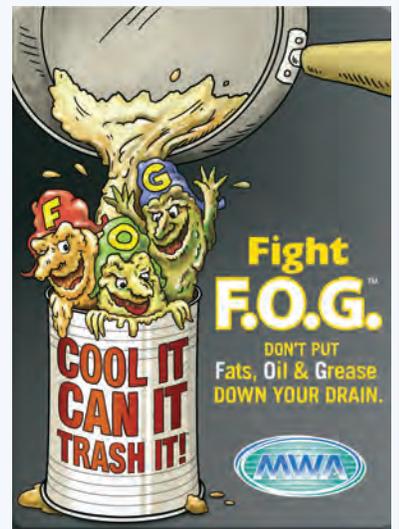
Approximately half of sewer spills and overflows are caused by fats, oils, and grease (FOG). When these harmful substances are poured down the drain, they can clog your home's plumbing and damage the MWA sewer system, when they harden and eventually clog sewer lines. As a result, "FOG clogs" can cause sewer spills and overflows, which are potentially harmful to our environment.

Instead of pouring FOG down your drain, let it cool, pour it into a sealed container, and throw it in the

trash. Also, wipe dishes clean before washing.

To help fight FOG, the MWA has a limited number of free, reusable grease can covers at our headquarters for your use.

For more information, check out the grease education page of our website at [www.maconwater.org/grease-education](http://www.maconwater.org/grease-education).



### MWA to fund infrastructure for Tindall Heights redevelopment

During its November Board Meeting, the MWA granted the request from the Macon Housing Authority (MHA) to fund the water and sewer infrastructure for the Tindall Heights redevelopment.

The estimated cost for construction of the water and sewer infrastructure for all four phases of redevelopment at Tindall Heights is approximately \$1.25 million. However, with approximately \$300,000 in revenue expected from tap fees for the new residences, that figure

reduces the estimated net cost to \$947,479.

The MWA plans to provide the funding over the course of three years, to coincide with the timetable of the development. With Phase 1 of construction at Tindall Heights underway, funding of approximately \$550,000 for the first two phases of water and sewer infrastructure will come from the MWA's current 2016-17 fiscal year (FY).

Funding for the water and sewer to accommodate Tindall Heights' Phase III of construction will total approximately \$538,000,

which will be appropriated by the Authority during its FY 2017-18 budget, which begins Oct. 1 of next year. Finally, the remaining amount of nearly \$160,000 for the Phase IV water and sewer will be provided during the MWA's 2018-19 fiscal year.

Critical to the agreement between the MWA and MHA is the stipulation that the Housing Authority receive approval for low income tax credits for the respective phases of the Tindall Heights development that any MWA infrastructure would serve.

**Happy Holidays from the Macon Water Authority!**

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND LEADERSHIP

Sam Hart  
Chairman  
478.745.1675

Frank Patterson  
Vice Chairman, District 4  
478.808.2020

Dorothy 'Dot' Black  
District 1  
478.742.3503

Javors J. Lucas  
District 2  
478.742.2722

Dwight Jones  
District 3  
478.238.3770

Bert Bivins, III  
Macon-Bibb  
Representative  
478.738.9466

Ed DeFore  
Macon-Bibb  
Representative  
478.474.0754

Tony Rojas  
Executive Director/  
President  
478.464.5600



790 Second Street  
P.O. Box 108  
Macon, Ga., 31202-0108

478.464.5600 (M-F)  
478.464.5656 (After Hours)  
[www.maconwater.org](http://www.maconwater.org)

